

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

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DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI:MGANDERSON;LHW
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AID/AA/NE:AWHITE
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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 120631

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, IS, JO

SUBJECT: U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCY OPERATIONS IN WEST BANK AND
GAZA

REF: TEL AVIV 5785

1. OUR ANALYSIS OF MIL GOV'S AND MIN SOC WELFARE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ANERA PROJECTS AND ANERA AS AN ORGANIZATION IS THAT (1) EITHER THESE TWO BUREAUCRACIES ARE SEEKING TO CONTROL ANERA AND ITS PROJECTS FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES, OR (2) THEY ARE CARRYING OUT A GENERAL POLICY WITH REGARD TO ALL PVOS OPERATING IN THE WEST BANK/GAZA LAID DOWN AT HIGHER LEVELS OF GOI. WE BELIEVE EMBASSY APPROACH TO MFA AT AN APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVEL SHOULD ADDRESS BOTH THESE POSSI-
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BILITIES, NOT RPT NOT IN FORM OF DEMARCHE, BUT RATHER AS
EXPRESSION OF U.S. CONCERNS THAT GOI ATTITUDES MAY BE SELF-
DEFEATING. - -

2. WE SUGGEST APPROACH BE MADE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

-- WITH SPECIFIC REGARD TO ANERA:

(A) WE ARE AWARE OF ISRAELI DISLIKE OF PALESTINIAN BIAS THEY PERCEIVE IN THIS VOLAG. WE FEEL HOWEVER THAT ANERA HAS

COOPERATED WITH ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN THE FORMULATION AND EXECUTION OF ITS PROGRAM. (POINTS MADE BY SELZ TO AVITSOUR IN MAY 1 MEETING RE EARLY NOTIFICATION AND CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION BY ANERA WITH MIL GOV AND MIN SOC WELFARE SHOULD BE REPEATED TO MFA. ALSO SHOULD NOTE ANERA'S WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY MIN SOC WELFARE.)

(B) ANERA AND OTHER PVO'S OPERATE WITHIN GENERAL GUIDELINES LAID DOWN BY AID, STATE AND, ULTIMATELY, THE U.S. CONGRESS. THOSE GUIDELINES PRECLUDE INTER ALIA REFUGEE RELIEF, WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY U.S. THROUGH OUR CONTRIBUTION TO UNRWA BUDGET.

(C) SINCE THE PVO PROGRAM'S INCEPTION IN 1975, ANERA HAS BEEN ABLE TO WORK OUT PROGRAMS WHICH CONFORMED TO BOTH U.S. AND ISRAELI GUIDELINES. WE SEE NO REASON WHY THIS SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO BE POSSIBLE AND ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WILL ONCE AGAIN TAKE FAVORABLE ACTION ON THE ANERA PROJECT PROPOSALS.

3. ADDRESSING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE MIN SOC WELFARE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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MIL GOV ARE CARRYING OUT A MORE GENERAL POLICY DIRECTIVE EMANATING FROM HIGH LEVEL OF GOI, YOU MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT:

(A) STATEMENTS BY MIL GOV AND MIN SOC WELFARE INDICATE TO US THAT THESE AGENCIES HAVE DECIDED THAT THEY, RATHER THAN LOCAL POPULATION WORKING WITH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, SHALL DECIDE WHICH PROJECTS ARE MOST NEEDED BY PEOPLE OF AREA AND WILL SUBMIT THEIR PROPOSALS TO ANERA OR OTHER VOLAGS FOR EXECUTION. THIS PROCEDURE, KNOWN AS JOINT PROGRAMMING, WOULD NOT BE IN ACCORD WITH CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN MAINTAINING AMERICAN-ARAB CHARACTER OF U.S.-SUPPORTED PVO PROGRAM.

(B) SOME ISRAELI GUIDELINES ARE INCONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN GUIDELINES TO VOLAGS TO FOCUS ACTIVITIES ON DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN WELFARE. AT BOTTOM LINE, WHAT WE HOPE FOR IS CONTINUATION OF THIS EXCELLENT PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PROGRAM WHICH HAS STRONG SUPPORT OF PVO COMMUNITY AND CONGRESS. WE WANT TO BE SURE GOI PROBLEMS WITH ANERA, AND SOMETIMES WITH OTHER PVOS, ARE DEALT WITH WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF OUR JOINT DESIRE TO SEE THESE ACTIVITIES CONTINUED FOR BENEFIT

PEOPLE OF WEST BANK AND GAZA.

(C) WE SENSE THAT SOME OF VOLAGS ARE BEGINNING TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERNS TO HILL ABOUT THEIR PERCEPTION OF UNNECESSARY "INTERFERENCE" IN THEIR PROGRAMS. WE UNCERTAIN WHETHER PRESENT TRENDS REPRESENT CONSIDERED POLICY OF ISRAEL GOVERNMENT OR INDIVIDUAL EFFORT, BUT ISRAEL SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER ASSUMED BENEFITS OF PRESENT COURSE ARE WORTH THE COSTS OF YET ANOTHER CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE IN U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS, WHICH ALTHOUGH NOT OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE IN GREAT SCHEME OF EVENTS IN MIDDLE EAST, WILL HAVE ITS ECHO IN CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC ARENAS.

(D) FINALLY, WE DO NOT SEE HOW INSISTENCE OF MIL GOV (AS
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EXEMPLIFIED IN APRIL 2 LETTER FROM COL. R. KAHALON TO SELZ) ON HAVING HAND IN DETAILED PLANNING OF PVO WEST BANK AID PROGRAMS CAN BE CONSIDERED CONSISTENT WITH STATED ISRAELI INTEREST IN ENCOURAGING OR PROMOTING EVOLUTION TOWARD ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. FAR FROM MOVING IN THIS DIRECTION, MIL GOV APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO ASSERT GREATER CONTROL OVER ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AMERICAN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS.

4. STATE AND AID OFFICIALS BROUGHT UP PVO PROBLEM WITH ISRAELI EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR BENTSUR AND ECON COUNSELOR RAFF AT AMBASSADOR DINITZ' INDEPENDENCE DAY RECEPTION. WE EXPECT THAT THESE EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN WILL BE REPORTED BY EMBASSY. VANCE

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